

Message Text

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USDOC FOR BEWT/TDAD/LUCYK

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: BEXP, BTRA, EMIN, UR

SUBJECT: PROPOSED SOVIET VISIT TO U.S. NON-FERROUS MINES

REF: MOSCOW 18475, LUCYK-STEWART TELCON JAN. 20

1. V.P. RAKOV, CHIEF, FOREIGN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT, MINISTRY OF NON-FERROUS METALLURGY, TOLD COMOFF JAN. 30 THAT MINISTRY WOULD LIKE TO (A) POSTPONE VISIT UNTIL MAY OR JUNE AND (B) INCLUDE ONE SURFACE MINING OPERATION IN ITINERARY IN ADDITION TO APPROXIMATELY THREE UNDERGROUND MINES. REASON GIVEN FOR THIS SWITCH WAS THAT NORILSK KOMBINAT INCLUDES BOTH UNDERGROUND AND OPEN-PIT OPERATIONS, AND LATTER MIGHT BE HARD TO VIEW IN WINTER MONTHS. AT SURFACE MINE DELEGATION WOULD BE INTERESTED IN SEEING FULL RANGE OF EQUIPMENT (INCLUDING SNOW CONTROL EQUIPMENT) CAPABLE OF OPERATING IN PERMAFROST CONDITIONS. DELEGATION WILL CONSIST OF FOUR SPECIALISTS PLUS INTERPRETER BUT FINAL COMPOSITION WILL ONLY BE DECIDED AFTER SITES SELECTED.

2. KUTUZOV, MINISTRY SPECIALIST ASSISTING RAKOV, PROVIDED FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION OF CONDITIONS AT NORILSK: WINTER TEMPERATURES AVERAGE MINUS 40-45 CENTIGRADE WITH 40 METER/SEC WINDS AND CONSIDERABLE SNOW. ORE VEINS ARE TILTED SO THERE ARE BOTH SURFACE OPERATIONS AND UNDERGROUND MINING AT DEPTHS REACHING 1000-1200 METERS, WHERE PRESSURE HIGH. THICKNESS OF VEINS 20-30 METERS.
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TUNNELS, SUPPORTED BY CONCRETE PILLARS, ARE FOUR METERS

WIDE AND THREE METERS HIGH WITH ADDITIONAL 1-1.2 METERS
LATER MINED FROM CEILING. HARDNESS OF ORE MAKES
DRILLING DIFFICULT. WAGNER, GARDNER-DENVER AND JOY
EQUIPMENT ALREADY IN USE UNDERGROUND.

3. COMMENT: WE HOPE ABOVE INFORMATION WILL ENABLE
BEWT TO PROPOSE APPROXIMATELY FOUR AMERICAN MINING SITES
WITH CONDITIONS ROUGHLY SIMILAR TO NORILSK (WITH PROBABLE
EXCEPTION OF ITS SEVERE CLIMATIC CONDITIONS).
PLEASE LET US KNOW, HOWEVER, IF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
NEEDED. SECOND CONSIDERATION WOULD BE RANGE OF EQUIPMENT
FROM DIFFERENT MANUFACTURERS AVAILABLE AT EACH
SITE, PARTICULARLY AT OPEN-PIT MINE. STOESSEL

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